

floor of the Senate that was, quite honestly, pretty remarkable. It was special, not because it was passionately delivered or because it was well-constructed, but because it so perfectly illuminated just how disconnected from reality the Senate's opponents of health care reform are.

Of the legislation pending in Congress, the minority leader said, "I am sure there are people in Kentucky who are for it. I have not met one."

Not one? Needless to say, this Kentuckian, for one, found the statement difficult to swallow, but that's beside the point.

The point is that my senior Senator made the claim despite poll after poll showing that the majority of the American people are for it, including not one but more than 1 million Kentuckians. The minority leader has read the same polls I have. I would venture to say that he has heard from many of the same thousands of Louisvillians from whom I've gotten calls, letters, e-mails, faxes, and visits. Everywhere I go in Louisville—from the VA hospital to community cookouts to the aisles of Kroger—I hear from people with valid perspectives on both sides of the issues, and we were elected to listen to all of them.

Yet my fellow Louisville resident proudly took the floor of the United States Senate this weekend and bragged that he was ignoring his constituents, half of them at least. He denied them as though a desire for reform is some sort of a preexisting condition that entitles him to abdicate his responsibilities to us.

Senator, you don't have to take my word for it, and I won't ask you to go searching through all of your old mail. If you're listening, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to a few of your constituents and mine—yes, your fellow Kentuckians. Then maybe the next time you exert your considerable power to stop something that you know is of vital importance to many of your constituents, you will take time to consider their views as well.

Elizabeth of Louisville wrote, "I am a single mother with two children. I am offered health insurance through my employer, but due to the high cost of this insurance, I do not always have enough money to go to the doctor when I need to. Health insurance companies have had at least two decades to get it together and fix the system they have in place, but they have chosen not to. Please do not place the citizens of this country at the mercy of some of the wealthiest companies in this country."

Bobby of Okolona wrote, "As a veteran and recently unemployed worker, I want to thank you for taking a stand on health care reform. I lost my job and insurance coverage in May of 2008. Do we need health care reform? You bet."

Mary of Louisville wrote, "I am asking you to support health care reform. We need a public option plan. My brother is a 59-year-old diabetic, and is

unable to get health care coverage. He is excluded from any plan."

Alvin of East End wrote, "Please do not let health care reform fail. I am a Registered Nurse. I've worked as a case manager at a local hospital. I have seen private insurance deny patients acute rehab after a stroke; whereas, with Medicare, we could have seen them."

Elizabeth of the East End wrote, "I am behind health care reform 100 percent. I am worried about our young adult children and how they can afford it. I have a child who had cancer. I've told her she needs to have a job that provides health insurance when she graduates. The insurance companies need to provide for those who need it most, not just the ones who are healthy."

□ 0915

Gregg of Louisville wrote, "Today I received my annual premium increase. My new premium has increased 32 percent. This has followed 18 to 25 percent increases in the last 3 years."

Andrea of Shively wrote, "Please vote for the health care bill. I am a heart attack survivor, and I am praying that I can stay with my company to keep my insurance. I will never be able to leave this company now that I have a preexisting condition."

Sandra of Prospect wrote, "I am totally behind President Obama's health care reform. I have insurance now, but was not allowed to have it for 4 years due to a preexisting condition. I lived in utter terror the entire time, fearing I would lose my house if I became sick."

Phyllis of the Highlands wrote, "I think we need health care for more people. For years, I struggled as a single parent to pay for health insurance for my five children, and it frequently cost me more than 30 percent of my income—in addition to copays."

Christian of Crescent Hill wrote, "I know what it is like not to have this basic human right, and I know how much better the quality of my life is now that I do not have to worry about it. I believe that it is shameful that we are the only developed country in the world without a public health system, and I would like to voice my support of the President's plan."

Finally, Matthew G., a 10-year-old boy from Louisville wrote, "My parents spend \$50,000 per year for my brother's autism, and I think it's a national crisis. It's just not fair, and this is a fair country, and everybody, no matter who they are, including my brother, Eric, should be treated equally."

Senator MCCONNELL, these are your constituents, yours and mine, and they are Americans. They are deserving of your attention and not your scorn. Please come with me to Louisville, and I will introduce you to more of the people who support health care reform for America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 17 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. BALDWIN) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

Rev. Richard Hynes, Office of Evangelism, Archdiocese of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, on this date, Catholics honor Jesus' mother, her own conception, especially today at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, which is dedicated in her honor as our patroness of the United States of America.

God of peace and justice, 68 years ago today, from this Chamber, President Franklin Roosevelt asked Congress for the permission to respond to terror inflicted on our country in Pearl Harbor the previous day.

Sadly, Lord God, terror continues today. Individuals, groups of individuals, and even some nation-states imagine terror, prepare for terror, and conspire for terror. However, the necessity to protect innocent people, the right of communities to live in peace, the expectation that people can live with differences and in harmony remain deep desires for Americans and for many others of goodwill.

Guide our Nation with right judgment and courage. Encourage all who labor for an end to terror. We shall never cease seeking Your inspiration in our endeavors to imagine peace and to work for justice.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.